



JAMES A. NOYES, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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August 12, 2002

IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE:

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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: James A. Noyes
Director of Public Works

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICTS
FINAL REPORT ON REMOVAL OF CARCINOGENS FROM THE DISTRICTS
DRINKING WATER
MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
JANUARY 30, 2001, SYNOPSIS 11**

On January 30, 2001, your Board approved a motion, Synopsis 11 (copy attached), by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich instructing the Director of Public Works to retain consultant services to develop water treatment alternatives to eliminate chromium VI, arsenic, and other carcinogens from drinking water. The consultant's final report (copy attached) entitled "Action Plan for Removal of Carcinogens in Drinking Water" was prepared by McGuire Environmental Consultants, Inc.

This final report covers Phases I and II of our four-phase action plan, prepared in response to your Board's motion of November 14, 2000, Synopsis 54 (copy attached), addressing the removal of carcinogens and other water impurities from our wells in the Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts Nos. 21, 37, and 40. Phase I identified seven carcinogens present in our well water. These carcinogens are arsenic, total chromium, chromium VI, gross alpha, cadmium, radon, and uranium. The results of Phase I were submitted to your Board on January 16, 2002.

This final report addresses treatment options, alternative water sources, and current and proposed regulations. As a result, our consultant developed three scenarios for carcinogen removal. For each scenario, the report includes a description of the required infrastructure modifications, anticipated treatment results, estimated costs, possible funding options, conceptual engineering requirements, and implementation plans.

The first and second scenarios addressed by the consultant are (a) "Most Aggressive Level of Carcinogen Removal," based on minimizing all carcinogens to the fullest extent feasible, with an estimated capital cost of \$315 million and an additional annual Operation and Maintenance cost of \$28.6 million; and (b) "Aggressive Level of Carcinogen Removal," based

on more restrictive state or federal health-based limits being considered, with an estimated capital cost of \$172.3 million and an additional annual operation and maintenance cost of \$9 million. These two scenarios would require treatment facilities at all 24 locations where well water enters the District's main water system.

The third treatment scenario, "Carcinogen Removal to Meet Regulatory Levels," only includes compliance with newly adopted drinking water standards for arsenic and more stringent standards being considered for radon that are scheduled to be finalized by September 2003. The consultant's estimates for removing or reducing arsenic and radon include capital costs ranging from \$27 million to \$63.2 million and additional annual operation and maintenance costs ranging from \$360,000 to \$1.2 million. The low range of cost is dependent on the ability of finding groundwater with low levels of arsenic and radon without having to develop costly treatment facilities.

As you are aware, our Districts are in compliance with all drinking water standards established by the California Department of Health Services (DHS) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). These requirements address both carcinogens and other water constituents. We are continuing to meet new standards through further development of our facilities and operational programs.

Although we have not performed any water rate impact analyses on any of these scenarios, it appears certain that this will require water rate increases to offset these costs. Particularly, implementing the final reports' "Aggressive" or "Most Aggressive" carcinogen removal scenarios without mandated requirements from the DHS or the USEPA would subject our customers to substantial expense for water treatment.

Therefore, we recommend that your Board reaffirm the Districts' policy of providing reliable, quality water at a reasonable cost that meets or exceeds all state and federal standards to the community. This will allow us to proceed with the design and construction of facilities to implement Phases III and IV of our Action Plan as they apply to compliance with current and future regulatory requirements.

If you have any questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Mr. Dean Efstathiou, Deputy Director, at (626) 458-4010, or Mr. Brian Hooper, Assistant Deputy Director, at (626) 300-3300.

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Attach.

Each Supervisor
August 12, 2002
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cc: Chief Administrative Office
Executive Office